

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /076 W

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R 130820Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7702

INFO ALL OAU CAPITALS 018

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 0424

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR OAU AO

SUBJECT: MPLA PRESS CONFERENCE: SOUTH AFRICAN AND PORTUGUESE  
PRISONERS DISPLAYED

1. LOPO DO NASCIMENTO, "PRIME MINISTER" OF PEOPLE'S  
REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA, HELD PRESS CONFERENCE AT HOTEL IN ADDIS  
LATE AFTERNOON JAN 12 DURING WHICH HE PRODUCED THREE SOUTH  
AFRICAN AND TWO PORTUGUESE PRISONERS AS "PROOF OF FOREIGN  
INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA, PARTICULARLY THE SOUTH AFRICAN  
INVASION OF HIS COUNTRY." WHEN QUESTIONED, PORTUGUESE  
SAID THEY WERE RECRUITED IN RHODESIA TO FIGHT AGAINST  
MPLA. SOUTH AFRICANS, ALL 18 OR 19 YEARS OF AGE, WERE  
REPORTED AS RIFLEMEN CAPTURED IN "SOUTHERN PART OF ANGOLA"  
WHILE FIGHTING ON SIDE OF UNITA AND FNLA.

2. ON ARRIVAL EARLIER AT AIRPORT, NASCIMENTO SAID HE  
HAD COME TO EXPLAIN MPLA'S POSITION TO SUMMIT AND MAIN  
THRUST HIS REMARKS AT PRESS CONFERENCE, WHICH WE ASSUME  
BEING REPORTED BY FBIS, WERE ON THIS SUBJECT. INTER  
ALIA, HE REPORTED AS SAYING THAT -ANGOLAN PEOPLE" ARE  
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FACING AN INVASION FROM BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH, NAMELY BY

ZAIRIAN AND SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES, ADDING THAT SITUATION IS "ALSO CHARACTERIZED BY ECONOMIC AGGRESSION ESPECIALLY BY IMPERIALISTS LED BY USA." HE ADDED THAT "IMPERIALISTS DO NOT LEARN FROM HISTORY. US THINKS THAT ANY UNDER-DEVELOPED COUNTRY CANNOT DEVELOPNWITHOUT HER PERMISSION."

3. COMMENT: CONFERENCE WAS ATTENDED BY SOME 200 MEMBERS OF PRESS, AMENG WHOM THERE APPEARED TO BE CONSIDER-ABLE DISGUST THAT PRISONERS WERE EXHIBITED AND FEELING THAT WHOLE EXERCISE WAS IN BAD TASTE. EPMG WAS ALSO CRITICIZED FOR ALLOWING ENTRY OF PRISONERS INTO THIRD COUNTRY. MPLA APPARENTLY TRIED TO HAVE THEM EXHIBITED AT AFRICA HALL, BUT THIS WAS REFUSED. THEY NONETHELESS WERE DRIVEN TO PRESS CONFERENCE IN ETHIOPIAN ARMY JEEP. WE EARLIER HEARD REPORTS THAT UPON LEARNING OF PRESENCE OF SOUTH AFRICANS IN ADDIS, AND IMPENDING PRESS CONFERENCE, SAVIMBI THREATENED TO PRODUCE CUBAN PRISONERS FOR SAME PURPOSE. ALLEGEDLY ETHIOPIA REFUSED HIM PERMISSION, BUT IN ANY CASE SAVIMBI'S THREAT WAS PROBABLY ESSENTIALLY EMPTY SINCE CUBANS WOULD HAVE HAD TO HAVE BEEN BROUGHT IN FROM LUSAKA ON SHORT NOTICE. WE DOUBT IN ANY CASE THAT EXHIBITING PRISONERS HAD MUCH IF ANY IMPACT ON SUMMIT DELEGATES AND MAY IN FACT HAVE DONE SOME HARM.  
HUMMEL

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